

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Attention: News Director  
For Immediate Release  
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
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Western District of Kentucky**

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**PROJECT BACKFIRE DEFENDANT SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS**

***– Meth lab operator had sawed-off shotgun and six handguns***

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, announced that **DONALD BELCHER**, age 42, of 6303 Powder Horn Drive, Louisville, Kentucky, was sentenced today in U.S. District Court for manufacturing methamphetamine and on gun charges.

**Belcher** was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Thomas B. Russell to 15 years in prison with five years of supervised release to follow his release from prison. He agreed to forfeiture to the government of \$2,885 in cash and a number of firearms. **There is no parole in the federal judicial system.**

**Belcher** previously pled guilty to conspiring to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine between June 17, 2005, and February 21, 2006, attempting to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine, and possessing 5 grams or more of methamphetamine with the intent to sell it. **Belcher** also pled guilty to possessing multiple firearms, including a sawed-off shotgun, in furtherance of his drug crimes.

Between June 17, 2005, and February 21, 2006, **Belcher** conspired with others to obtain pseudoephedrine from various pharmacies in and around the Louisville area to manufacture methamphetamine. **Belcher**, assisted by others, obtained over 300 grams of pseudoephedrine for

use in manufacturing methamphetamine during this time frame. On February 21, 2006, Louisville Metro Police executed a search warrant at **Belcher's** residence located at 6303 Powder Horn Drive, Louisville, Kentucky, and found a methamphetamine laboratory in his basement. **Belcher** had all the necessary ingredients to manufacture methamphetamine in his residence and was in the process of manufacturing methamphetamine with the intention of distribution in and around Louisville. Police located approximately 2 quarts of methamphetamine oil in the last stages of the manufacturing process. This would have produced over 50 grams of methamphetamine. Additionally, police seized over 5 grams of methamphetamine from **Belcher's** person and residence. Police also seized **Belcher's** loaded Remington short barrel shotgun which he had stuffed in his basement couch in close proximity to his methamphetamine laboratory in order to protect his laboratory. Police found numerous other firearms in the house including a Colt .38 caliber revolver, a Ruger .22 caliber firearm, a Bryco Arms .38 caliber firearm, a Lorcin .380 caliber firearm, and three Smith and Wesson 9mm firearms. **Belcher** admitted that he possessed all of these firearms in furtherance of his drug trafficking and drug manufacturing activities.

**This is a Project Backfire prosecution. Project Backfire** is a cooperative effort by the Jefferson County Attorney's Office, the Jefferson County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Louisville Metro Police Department, and the United States Attorney's Office to ensure that firearm offenses are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the state and federal law.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James H. Barr and it was investigated by the Louisville Metro Police Department (Third Division Flex Platoon and Metro Narcotics) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

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